GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2685
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2000
INDO-SRI LANKAN TIES
P.R. KHUTE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of agreements signed by India and Sri Lanka during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government have reviewed these agreements; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a), (b) & (c) The following MOUs and Agreements were signed by the Governments of India and Sri Lanka during 1997-98 to 1999-2000: -

(i) India and Sri Lanka signed a Free Trade Agreement on December 28, 1998.This was operationalized through exchange of letters between the two governments on February 2, 2000. The Sri Lankan Government gave effect to the provisions of the agreement from February 15, 2000 and the Government of India did so from March 1, 2000.In the course of the First Meeting of the Working Group on Customs under the India - Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement held from 14 - 15 September, 2000, the two sides reviewed the working of the India - Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement and expressed satisfaction at the progress so far under the India - Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement. The two delegations emphasized that the facilitation by Customs has a crucial role in ensuring its smooth and successful implementation and agreed to continue to enhance the cooperation further for the mutual benefit of both the countries.

(ii) An MOU was signed on December 28, 1998 at New Delhi to establish an India - Sri Lanka Foundation to encourage cultural and educational exchanges between the two countries. The Foundation was inaugurated on November 19, 1999. Under Article XI of the MOU meetings of the Board are held once a year alternately in India and Sri Lanka. The working of the Foundation is reviewed on this occasion.